

Listen, I've got the hook. I got the sign to go. We could be here for hours, but the problem is there's about 15,000 people waiting somewhere else—[laughter]—equally as important as you all. They vote. It's an important State, as the guy said. He said, "It's a swing State." We intend to not only carry Wisconsin but Minnesota as well.

I want to thank you all for coming. I hope you've enjoyed this as much as I have. Thank you for your help. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:28 p.m. at Lakefront Park. In his remarks, he referred to Dale Schultz, candidate for Congress in Wisconsin's Third Congressional District; Mayor Jack Breault of Hudson, WI; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

### Remarks in St. Paul, Minnesota August 18, 2004

**The President.** Thank you all very much for coming. Thanks for having me. I'm glad we came, Mr. Mayor. I'm proud to stand by your side. I am really proud to have your endorsement. St. Paul has got a wise and tough and principled man as the mayor of this city. I appreciate him bucking the political winds to do what he thinks is right in the 2004 campaign.

You know, there's a lot of differences in this campaign. The other day, my opponent said he thought you could find the heart and soul of America in Hollywood. I think you can find it right here in this hall. I'm proud to be with the heart and soul of America tonight, and thank you for coming. I'm here to ask for the vote. I'm in this important State to let the people know I'm asking for the vote. There is more to do to make America a safer place, a stronger place, and a better place for every single citizen.

I'm also here to thank the grassroots activists for your support. I want you to work hard to put up the signs, man the phones, register your friends and neighbors to vote. I appreciate all your hard work, and when you get them headed toward the polls, remember

that George Bush and Dick Cheney are what's best for this country. [Applause] Thank you. With your help, we will carry the great State of Minnesota. With your help, we'll achieve a great victory in November of this year.

I only wish Laura could be here to see and hear this crowd. She's a wonderful mother and a great wife. Listen, I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura has 4 more years as the First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. Listen, I admit it. He's not the prettiest face in the race. [Laughter] I didn't pick him for his looks. [Laughter] I picked him for his judgment, his experience, his ability to get the job done.

I'm proud to be up here with a great United States Senator, Norman Coleman. I appreciate his service. He's here with his dad. It's good to see you, Mr. Coleman. Thank you for being here. I want to thank members of the Minnesota congressional delegation who are here, Gil Gutknecht, John Kline, and Mark Kennedy, three fine Members of the House. Thank you all for coming, proud you're here.

I want to thank Pat Anderson and Erik Paulsen for coming. I want to thank all the elected officials who are here. Thank you for serving your State and your community.

I appreciate Laura Ingraham for being the emcee of this fine event. I want to thank all the veterans who are here tonight. I appreciate you coming. I want to thank my friend Joe Repya. I want to thank the Minnesota Teen Challenge Choir for joining us tonight. Thank you all for coming. And I appreciate my friend Ricky Skaggs for being here as well.

Most of all, thank you all for taking time out of your day to come by and say hello. I appreciate it. It means a lot—it means a lot. You know, in the past few years we've been through a lot together. We've accomplished a great deal. But there's only one reason to look backward at the record, and that's to determine who best to lead this Nation forward. I'm asking for the vote because so much is at stake. We have so much more to do to move this Nation forward. We've got more to do to create jobs and to improve

our schools. We've got more to do to protect our homeland and spread the peace. We've made much progress, and there is more to do.

We have more to do to make our public schools the centers of excellence we all know they can be so that no child is left behind in America. You know, when we came to office 3½ years ago, too many of the children were being shuffled grade to grade, year after year, without learning the basics. We challenged the soft bigotry of low expectations. We've raised the bar. We believe in accountability so we know whether or not our children can read and write and add and subtract. We're willing to challenge the status quo if our children are being failed in America.

There's more work to do. We want our high schools to issue a diploma that means something. We want to encourage math and science so our children have the schools necessary to work in the—for the jobs of the 21st century. We'll bring the Internet to high-level—for high-level training in the classrooms. What I'm telling you is, after 4 more years, a rising generation will have the confidence and the skills necessary to realize the great promise of America.

We have more to do to make quality health care available and affordable. You might remember the old debates on Medicare. Year after year, the politicians would promise you a modernized Medicare system. We got the job done. Beginning in 2006, all seniors on Medicare will be able to choose the plan that suits their needs and gives them coverage for prescription drugs. We've done more. We've expanded community health centers for low-income Americans so they can get primary care in places other than emergency rooms in your hospitals. We've created health savings accounts so families can save tax-free for their own health care needs. When it comes to giving Americans more choices for their own health care and making health care more affordable, we are moving America forward.

Most Americans get their health care coverage through their work. Most of today's new jobs are created by small businesses, which too often cannot afford to provide health care. To help more American families get health insurance, we must allow small

employers to join together to purchase insurance at the discounts that big companies are able to do.

We'll harness technology to reduce costs and prevent mistakes. We'll do more to expand research and seek new cures. And to make sure we've got available and affordable health care, we must have medical liability reform. I don't think you can be pro-doctor and pro-patient and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. I made my choice. I stand with the patients and doctors. I support medical liability reform now. In all we do to improve health care in America, we'll make sure the health decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

And there's more work to be done to make our economy stronger. Our economy's been through a lot. We've been through a recession. We've been through a terror attack that some estimated cost us a million jobs. We've been through corporate scandals. But we've overcome these obstacles, because the spirit of America is strong. We've got great workers, great farmers, great small-business owners. And we've overcome these obstacles because of well-timed tax cuts.

You know, we didn't pick winners or losers when it came to tax relief. We did it the fair way. We said, "If you pay Federal income taxes, you ought to get relief." We helped our families with children. We reduced the marriage penalty. It's a bad tax system that penalizes marriage. We ought to be encouraging marriage in America. We helped our small businesses, and this time, the check actually was in the mail. Because we acted, our economy has—since last summer, has grown at a rate as fast as any in nearly 20 years. Because we acted, America has added 1.5 million new jobs since last August and the unemployment rate is down to 5.5 percent. Because we acted, Minnesota's unemployment rate is at 4.4 percent. When it comes to creating jobs, we're moving America forward, and we're not going to turn back.

Our farm economy is strong, and I intend to keep it that way. I appreciate the farmers who are here today.

There's more work to be done to make sure that we've got jobs here in America. Listen, we need an energy plan. I submitted a plan to the United States Congress nearly 2 years ago. It needs to get to my desk—an energy plan that encourages conservation, renewable sources of energy, an energy plan that encourages the exploration of natural resources here, close to home, in environmentally friendly ways. But one thing is certain: For the sake of economic security and the sake of national security, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We got to make sure our workers have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. That's why I'm a strong backer of lifetime learning for America's workers and the smart utilization of our community college system here in this country.

In order to make sure we've got jobs here in America, we need reasonable regulations on our business creators, our job creators. We need tort reform. In order to keep jobs here in America, we've got to make sure we open up markets for Minnesota products, and reject economic isolationism. In order to keep jobs here in America, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low.

We have a difference in opinion on this campaign about taxes. My opponent said that he's going to—he promised about over \$2 trillion of new programs. And so we said, "Well, how are you going to pay for it?" He said, "Well, I'll pay for it by taxing the rich." You've heard that before, haven't you? You've heard that line. That's why people hire accountants and lawyers, so you won't be able to tax them. You can't raise enough money to pay for all his spending by so-called taxing the rich. He's going to try to stick you with the tax bill. We're not going to let him raise your taxes. He's not going to win. When you put me back into office for 4 more years, I'll continue to pursue a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-farmer agenda that enables America to remain the strongest economy in the industrialized world.

We have more to do to wage and win the war against terror. America's future depends on our willingness to lead in the world. If America shows uncertainty and weakness in

this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This is not going to happen on my watch.

The world changed on a terrible September morning, and since that day, we have changed the world. Before September the 11th, Afghanistan served as the home base of Al Qaida, which trained and deployed thousands of killers to set up terror cells in dozens of countries, including our own. Because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy. Afghanistan is an ally in the war against the terrorists, and many young girls go to school for the first time in their lives. Because we acted, America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, the ruler in Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Today, because America and our allies have sent a strong and easy-to-understand message, the leader of Libya abandoned his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, the ruler of Iraq was a sworn enemy of America. He was defying the world. He was firing weapons at American pilots who were enforcing the world's sanctions. He had pursued and used weapons of mass destruction. He harbored terrorists. He invaded his neighbors. He subsidized the families of suicide bombers. He murdered tens of thousands of his own citizens. He was a source of great instability in the world's most volatile region. Saddam Hussein was a threat.

One of the important lessons that we must never forget is that after September the 11th, we must take threats seriously before they fully materialize. I recognized that. I realized that, and so I went to the United States Congress and said, "I believe there is a threat in Iraq." Members of the Congress, the House and the Senate, members of both political parties, including my opponent, came to the same conclusion: Saddam Hussein was a threat. Listen, the hardest decision a President ever makes is to commit those who wear our uniform into combat. It's a hard decision, and it ought to be the last option for a President. So I went to the United Nations, and I said to the United Nations, I said, "I believe there's a threat." They looked at the same

intelligence; they remembered the same history and came to the same conclusion. They passed a resolution 15 to nothing that said to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences."

The world spoke. But as he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein defied the world. He wasn't about to disclose or disarm, because he didn't think there were serious consequences. As a matter of fact, we sent—we didn't—the U.N. sent inspectors into Iraq, but he systematically deceived the inspectors. I knew he was systematically deceiving the inspectors, as did others. So I had a choice to make: Either to forget the lessons of September the 11th and trust a madman who is a sworn enemy of America, or take action necessary to defend this country. Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Even though we did not find the stockpiles that we expected to find, I want you to remember that Saddam Hussein had the capability of making weapons, and he could have passed that capability on to our enemies. And that was a risk we could not afford to take after September the 11th. Knowing what I know today, I would have taken the same course of action. America and the world are safer with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

Now, almost 2 years after he voted for the war in Iraq and 7 months after switching positions to declare himself the antiwar candidate, my opponent has found a new nuance. He now agrees it was the right decision to go into Iraq. After months of questioning my motives and even my credibility, the Massachusetts Senator now agrees with me that even though we have not found the stockpiles of weapons we all believed were there, knowing everything we know today, he would have voted to go into Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein from power. I appreciate him clarifying his position. [*Laughter*] There are—however, there are still 76 days left in the campaign for him to change his mind.

We have more to do. I'm running because I understand there's more work to be done. We must continue to work with friends and allies around the world to aggressively pursue the terrorists in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere. See, you can't talk sense to these people. You can't negotiate with them. You can-

not hope for the best. We must engage these enemies around the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

America will continue to lead the world with confidence and moral clarity. We put together a strong coalition to join us in the defeat of our enemies. Listen, there's nearly 40 nations involved in Afghanistan, some 30 nations involved in Iraq. I appreciate the sacrifices the moms and dads and husbands and wives of those countries are making alongside those of our country to secure our freedom. We will continue to build alliances and work with our friends for the cause of security and peace. I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

We will keep our commitments to help Afghanistan and Iraq become peaceful democratic societies. See, these two nations are now governed by strong leaders who believe in the hopes and aspirations of their people. And we have a clear goal in those two countries, peaceful and democratic societies which are allies of ours in the war on terror. We will help those people meet those goals by providing security as the political process moves forward. We will help them train their own troops, so they can step up and do the hard work necessary for a free society. Our military will complete this mission as quickly as possible so our troops do not stay a day longer than necessary.

We have a difference of opinion as to how to handle this issue in Iraq. After all, my opponent said the other day that if he's elected, the number of troops in Iraq will be significantly reduced within 6 months. I don't think it's a wise statement. You see, it sends the wrong signal. I mean, after all, the enemy says, "Fine, I'll wait 6 months and 1 day." It sends the wrong signal to our troops. It sends the wrong signal to the Iraqis. See, they're watching carefully. They wonder whether or not we will stand with them as they do the hard work for a free society to emerge. So long as I am the President, when America gives its word, America will keep its word.

In these crucial times, our commitments are kept by the men and women that wear our uniform. I'm really proud of our military. We've got a fantastic military. I've traveled

our country and met with our troops. I've seen their great decency and their unselfish courage. Ladies and gentlemen, I can assure you the cause of freedom is in really good hands.

I have made a commitment to them and to their loved ones: Our troops will have the resources they need to fight and win the war against the terrorists. And that's why—so last September I went to the Congress, while our troops were in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, and I proposed supplemental funding to support them in their mission. This was an important piece of legislation. It was money for body armor and vital equipment, for hazard pay, for health benefits, ammunition, fuel, and spare parts. We received great bipartisan support. Members of both political parties recognized that when you had people in harm's way, they deserve the full support of Government. As a matter of fact, it was such good bipartisan support only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against it, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

**Audience members.** Boo-o-o!

**The President.** So they asked him to explain his vote. He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." [Laughter] I don't think they talk that way in St. Paul, Minnesota. They pressed him on the vote, and he said, well, he's proud of the vote. Then he finally said, "The whole thing is a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

In the long run, our security is not guaranteed by force alone. We'll work to change the conditions that give rise to terror: poverty and hopelessness and resentment. You see, a free and peaceful Iraq and a free and peaceful Afghanistan will serve as powerful examples in a part of the world that is desperate for freedom. Free countries do not export terror. Free countries do not stifle the dreams of their citizens. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're spreading the peace that we all want. And by serving the ideal of liberty, we're serving the deepest ideals of America. We understand freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the

Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

We have more to do to protect America. There are enemies who hate us, and they're still plotting. It's the reality of the world we live in today. We have a difference of opinion about these folks. My opponent says that going to war with the terrorists is actually improving their recruiting efforts. I think the logic is wrong. I think it shows a misunderstanding of the enemy we face. See, during the 1990s, the terrorists were recruiting and training for war with us long before we went to war with them. They don't need an excuse for their hatred. I think it's wrong to blame the actions of our country for the anger and evil of those killers. You don't create terrorists by fighting back. We defeat the terrorists by fighting back.

We're working hard here at home to protect you. There's a lot of really good, decent people at the Federal level, the State level, the first-responders here in St. Paul, Minnesota, that are working long hours to do everything we can to protect the American people. This is our most solemn duty. It's what we're called to do. We created the new Department of Homeland Security. We passed the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act is necessary for law enforcement to be able to protect you. We're integrating intelligence and law enforcement better than before. I've already taken a lot of action on a majority of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. We're working hard to secure our ports and our borders, to train first-responders, to improve dramatically our intelligence-gathering capability.

We're working on reform. It's not easy in Washington to reform things. There's a lot of entrenched interests there. There's a lot of people interested in defending the status quo. You see, it's not enough to advocate reform. You have to be able to get the job done.

When it comes to reforming our schools to provide excellent education for every child, we're getting the job done. When it comes to health care reforms to get families and seniors more access and more choices, we're getting the job done. When it comes to improving our economy and creating quality jobs, we're getting the job done. When it comes to better securing the homeland and

spreading freedom and peace, we are getting the job done. What I'm saying to you is, when it comes to electing a President, put somebody back in the White House who can get the job done.

You know, we live in a time of rapid change. These are exciting times, and times have changed. It's important for Government to help by standing side by side with families and workers. And a great way to do that is to promote an ownership society. I'll continue to promote ownership in America. Listen, it's important for people to own their own health care account so if they change jobs, they can take their own health care account with them. If you're a younger worker, you ought to be concerned about the fiscal stability of Social Security. Old baby boomers like me are okay, but for younger workers, there's a question about the fiscal solvency of Social Security, and therefore, I think you ought to be given the choice to have a personal savings account and Social Security to call your own.

You know, one of the great—one of the heartening statistics of our country today is ownership rates are at an alltime high. It's a fantastic thought, when you think more and more Americans from all walks of life are opening the door, saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property." We want more people to own things. We want to create an environment so more people own their own business. We want the small-business sector of our economy to remain vibrant and strong. The reason why I continue to promote an ownership society in America is because I understand if you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of the United States of America.

In changing times there's some things that won't change: Our belief in liberty and opportunity and the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity; the individual values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity; the institutions that give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, and our religious congregations.

We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matter and every person counts.

We stand for judges who faithfully interpret the law instead of legislating from the bench.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. Listen, the culture of our country is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in your community, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

I'm running for 4 more years to continue to rally the armies of compassion all across America. See, I understand the limitations of Government. Government can hand out money, but Government cannot put love in a person's heart or a sense of purpose in a person's life. That happens when a loving soul puts their arm around somebody who hurts and says, "I love you. What can I do to help you? I want to walk with you. I want to stand with you." You see, I believe by rallying the armies of compassion, we can change America one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time, to make sure this great American experience is available to all our citizens.

For all Americans, these years in our history will stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time where we need firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep belief in the values that make us a great country.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. Workers in hardhats were yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember shaking people's hands and a guy looked me in the eye, his bloodshot eyes, he'd just come out of the rubble, saying, "Do not let me down."

It was a powerful day. You know, I came away from that site recognizing that everybody there searching through the rubble took that day personally. My fellow citizens took it personally. I took it personally. I have a duty that goes on. Every day that I wake up, I think about how best to secure our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

We have come through much together. We've done a lot of hard work. But there's more work to be done to move this country forward. During the next 4 years, we will spread opportunity and ownership throughout every corner of our country. We will pass the enduring values of our country to another generation. We will continue to work to spread freedom and peace.

You know, when I campaigned in your State 4 years ago, I asked—when I was asking for the vote, I made a pledge to the people of Minnesota and the people of our country that if you honored me with this great responsibility, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected. And with your help and with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:55 p.m. at the Xcel Energy Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Randy Kelly of St. Paul, MN; Minnesota State Auditor Patricia Anderson; Minnesota State Representative Erik Paulsen; talk radio show host Laura Ingraham; Lt. Col. Joe Repya, USAR (Ret.) Bush Cheney '04 Minnesota Veterans Co-Chair; country music entertainer Ricky Skaggs; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission).

## **Memorandum on Determination To Make Available Assistance for Liberia**

*August 20, 2004*

Presidential Determination No. 2004-43

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Administrator, United States Agency for International Development*

*Subject: Determination to Make Available Assistance for Liberia*

Consistent with the authority vested in me under the Act Making Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004 (Public Law 108-106), under the heading "International Disaster and Famine Assistance," I hereby determine that it is in the national interest and essential to efforts to reduce international terrorism to furnish \$86 million in assistance for Liberia from funds made available under that heading.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

**George W. Bush**

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## **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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### **August 14**

In the morning, in Redmond, WA, the President had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Sioux City, IA, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with